

104 *PURDUE ENGINEERING EXTENSION DEPARTMENT*

enlargement and deepening of the footing for the pier at the west end of the main arches. This was due to an irregularity in the face of the rock at the south end of the excavation. At the completion of the work, we were informed by the Traction Company that they would not build a track across the bridge at this time. It was then necessary to have the depression which had been left for the car track filled. This was filled with washed sand and covered by an 8-inch slab of concrete.

The detail cost of the entire structure was as follows:

Paid Contractor on Contract (lump sum) ..	\$198,765.00
Paid Contractor on Contract (extras)	17,695.57
Attorney Fees.....	2,000.00
Engineering Costs.....	2,100.00
Indiana State Highway Commission (assistance and inspection)	2,978.21
Printing Bonds.....	264.00
Miscellaneous	267.22

Total\$224,070.00

The bonds for the cost of the structure bear interest at the rate of 4 per cent and are so arranged that they will all be paid in fourteen and one-half years.

This was our first experience with state inspection on county work and I would like to say that there was no trouble of any kind and that we were very much pleased with this arrangement.

WAGES FOR VARIOUS CLASSES OF COUNTY HIGHWAY EMPLOYEES

By A. C. Gengelbach, Perry County Highway Superintendent

The amount of wages paid for road labor has always been a source of criticism by the taxpayers. It presents a more difficult problem at present with so many men unemployed. Some taxpayers feel that one of the most necessary means of tax reduction is wage cutting. This may be justifiable in many cases, but the more important factor is the securing of competent workmen who will properly handle and care for the equipment and fulfill their duties in a workmanlike manner.

Our wage schedule varies for different classes of employees. Those who do general maintenance work, such as shoveling earth, loading scrapers, cutting brush, cleaning right of way, placing culverts, and doing other work of that kind, receive 20 cents per hour. Experienced road men capable of doing repair work receive 25 cents an hour. Truck drivers, tractor drivers, grader operators, stone-crusher feeders, drillers, and blasters receive 30 cents an hour.

For hired trucks hauling gravel or crushed limestone, we pay 80 cents an hour. Most of this hauling, however, is paid for at the rate of 6 cents to 10 cents a yard-mile, the length and nature of the haul governing the price. For trucks hauling material graded out of road ditches, the pay is 60 cents an hour. The truck drivers help load their own trucks when working by the hour.

Stone quarry labor is handled on the piece work plan, which pays 10 cents a yard for breaking the stone and the same price for loading. By this method, we get more work done and can crush faster than by paying on the hourly basis. Prior to this schedule, we were paying 25 cents an hour for labor and 15 cents an hour for breaking and loading stone. Wages paid for other labor were the same as at present.

When contractors cut the price of labor for road work to 12½ cents an hour for hand labor and 25 cents an hour for teams doing practically the same work that we were doing, the taxpayers figured that we should pay less wages. The contractors building State Road 37 paid 20 cents an hour for labor, thereby establishing a lower wage scale than ours. Wages paid by the county should not be more than the prevailing scale for similar work done in the same locality. Therefore, the thing for us to do was to lower our wages accordingly.

The class of employees receiving the greatest criticism are the truck drivers. The people see them more than any other class of our workmen. To them a truck driver in his cab riding along apparently has an easy job. The average taxpayer, however, fails to realize that this workman is responsible for a \$3,000 investment of county funds which through neglect or carelessness may soon run up very excessive repairs bills resulting in rapid depreciation. If the truck belonged to the individual taxpayer instead of the county, would he be willing to entrust it to the ministrations of a cheap, careless driver?

A capable quarry driller is another employee who really saves money for the taxpayer. He does his own steel sharpening and tempering, and also repairs the hammer and air compressor. He is a handy man around the crusher. I have in mind one taxpayer who told me 20 cents an hour for that work would be a big price. I asked him, "Do you know what it costs to have a steel drill sharpened and shanked?" He thought 25 cents about right. We have paid for this work as high as \$1.20, seldom less than \$1.00.

In all our work, we have tried to keep the wages in accordance with other prices so as to give the taxpayer full value for his money.